

Message Text

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71

ACTION EUR-25

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FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8970

INFO COMUSFORAZ

CINCLANT

JCS

CSAF

C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 0147

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MAAR PO

SUBJ: HOST SERVICE AT LAJES

REF: STATE 003315

1. EMBASSY BELIEVES BEST SCENARIO FOR CONVEYING TO PORTUGUESE GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC USG DECISION FOR USAF TO RETAIN HOST RESPONSIBILITY AT LAJES IS FOR COMUSFORAZ TO MAKE ANNOUNCEMENT AT LAJES OVER AFRS RADIO AND TELEVISION ADDRESSED TO AMERICANS AND LOCAL EMPLOYEES ON BASE. WE RECOMMEND AN ANNOUNCEMENT ALONG FOLLOWING LINES:

2. QUOTE AS YOU KNOW, THE PRINCIPAL MILITARY ACTIVITY CONDUCTED BY US FORCES OUT OF LAJES FIELD IS THE MONITORING BY MARTIME PATROL AIRCRAFT OF SUBMARINE TRAFFIC IN THIS AREA OF THE ATLANTIC, AN ACTIVITY WHICH IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE US NAVY. SINCE THIS ACTIVITY WAS AND IS THE MAJOR CONTINUING FUNCTION OF THIS COMMAND, IT WAS DECIDED LAST YEAR THAT THE US COMMAND RESPONSIBILITY AT LAJES SHOULD BE TRANSFERRED FROM THE AIR FORCE TO THE US NAVY. SINCE THAT DECISION WAS TAKEN, HOWEVER, NUMEROUS UNFORESEEN
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ADMINISTRATIVE AND OPERATIONAL DIFFICULTIES HAVE BEEN

ENCOUNTERED AS WE MOVED TOWARD THE CHANGE-OVER. THESE DIFFICULTIES, AND THE ATTENDANT COSTS, HAVE ASSUMED SUCH PROPORTIONS THAT IT HAS NOW BEEN DECIDED, FOR REASONS OF ECONOMY, ADMINISTRATIVE CONVENIENCE AND CONTINUITY, TO RESCIND THAT EARLIER DECISION. CONSEQUENTLY, COMMAND AND OPERATION OF THE US FORCES IN THE AZORES WILL REMAIN THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE U.S. AIR FORCE DESPITE THE FACT THAT THE MAJOR US MILITARY ACTIVITY OPERATED OUT OF LAJES WILL REMAIN THE NAVY ASW FUNCTION. UNQUOTE

3. WE UNDERSTAND COMUSFORAZ WILL SOON DELIVER LETTER FROM GENERAL BROWN, CHIEF OF STAFF USAF, TO PORTUGUESE SECSTATE FOR AIR, GENERAL POLLERI, INFORMING GOP THAT USAF WILL REMAIN HOST. WE PROPOSE THIS COMMUNICATION BE ONLY OFFICIAL US ADVICE TO GOP, AND DO NOT PLAN ISSUE PRESS RELEASE.

4. WE EXPECT THAT ANNOUNCEMENT AT LAJES AND BROWN-POLLERI LETTER WILL, WITHIN A SHORT PERIOD OF TIME, STIMULATE INQUIRIES HERE, WHICH WE WILL ANSWER BY DRAWING ON THE COMUSFORAZ STATEMENT. WE FEEL THAT KEEPING THE INITIATIVE FOR THE ANNOUNCEMENT IN LAJES WILL MAXIMIZE THE ADMINISTRATIVE/ECONOMIC RATIONALE, AND, THROUGH THE EMPHASIS ON THE NAVY ASW FUNCTION, WILL PRESERVE SOME OF THE NATO-ORIENTATION OF OUR BASE RIGHTS RENEWAL NEGOTIATING POSTURE.

5. REQUEST APPROVAL.
SCOTT

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NNN

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